

*Richard E. D'Aquin*, Chair

*William T. Roberts, Jr.*, Vice Chair

*Roland M. Toups*, Secretary

*E. Joseph Savoie*  
Commissioner of Higher Education



**BOARD OF REGENTS**

*150 Third Street, Suite 129  
Baton Rouge, LA 70801-1389  
Phone (225) 342-4253  
FAX (225) 342-9318  
www.regents.state.la.us*

*Herschel L. Abbott, Jr.  
William "Billy" Blake  
Scott O. Brame  
Reggie Dupré  
John D. Georges  
Frances T. Henry  
Melvin L. Rambin  
Virgil Robinson, Jr.  
Norbert A. Simmons  
William Clifford Smith  
Pat A. Strong  
Sherman G. Ruth  
Student*

*Member*

April 9, 2001

Contact: John R. Kemp

**UNIVERSITY TEACHER PREP PERFORMANCE REPORTS GO ON LINE**

**BATON ROUGE** -- The Board of Regents for postsecondary education has released its "2000-2001 Institutional Reports for the Preparation of Teachers," outlining the current performance of teacher education programs at Louisiana's public and private colleges and universities.

This year's reports, partially prepared for the Regents by the national Education Testing Service, will be a benchmark for what will become annual report cards that will measure how well colleges and universities are doing in preparing teachers for the state's elementary and high school classrooms. The reports also will provide useful information for on-going statewide teacher reform efforts.

Louisiana's reform efforts were first initiated in 1999 by Louisiana's Blue Ribbon Commission on Teacher Quality. The commission is a joint statewide effort by Governor Foster, the Board of Regents and the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, or BESE, to recruit, train and retain more effective teachers throughout the state. The federal government is now also involved in teacher accountability requiring states to compile and publish teacher preparation information beginning this year.

"These reports," Savoie said, "will help colleges and universities, PK-16+ Councils and PK-16+ Redesign Teams to further improve their programs. Building upon this year's data, report cards will be issued on each university annually, beginning next year, to disclose institutional efforts in preparing new teachers."

Commenting on the institutional reports, state Superintendent of Education Cecil Picard said this initiative is another part of Louisiana's educational accountability program. "We hold students accountable with high-stakes testing," he said. "We hold schools accountable in grades K-12. Next we're going to be

*The Board of Regents is an Equal Opportunity and ADA Employer*

holding school district accountable for raising student achievement. It makes sense that we should also encourage improvement among our teacher preparation programs. Accountability has been good for Louisiana education. We've seen gains in every measure of student achievement, and I would expect that this element of the accountability program will reap both short-and long-term improvements in student performance.”

“Education reform and funding are top priorities in my administration,” said Governor Murphy J. “Mike” Foster. “We continue to make significant investments in education at all levels, but with that investment comes accountability. These institutional reports and reforms being made in college teacher preparation programs are major steps in creating that accountability and public confidence in the direction we are taking.”

The current institutional reports contains general information about each college and university, such as student enrollment, accreditations, notable features and accomplishments, and a student-faculty profile of the institution’s teacher preparation program.

Each five-page report also gives a detailed breakdown on how well students in teacher preparation programs perform on various tests that gauge basic skills (communications, reading, writing and math), professional knowledge, skills in teaching special populations, academic areas (math, English, biology, etc.), and other content areas (career and technical education, health education, etc.). Institutional and statewide pass rates for education majors taking the state teacher certification exams also are included.

“These reports give us a good foundation for our teacher preparation reform efforts,” said Frances Henry, a member of the Board of Regents and Blue Ribbon Commission co-chair. “Our goal is to produce a greater number of quality teachers who are going into the school systems prepared to make an impact on student learning.”

The Blue Ribbon Commission and its teacher preparation reform initiatives have created a strong working relationship within the entire education community, said Glenny Lee Buquet, commission chair and BESE member. “Through the work of the Blue Ribbon Commission, BESE and Regents have established a relationship unique to K-12 and higher education communities in this country, and this partnership has already accomplished much,” Buquet said. “The work of the commission has succeeded in bringing state, university, district, and school leaders together to review and recommend policy revisions and to develop

plans for a cohesive PK-16 system.”

The federal Higher Education Act also requires, beginning Oct. 8, 2001, each state to submit annually to the U.S. Department of Education a report on their individual state teacher preparation reform efforts and

progress. The following April, federal education officials will give Congress and the public a full report and update on how well each state is doing in providing better trained teachers for the nation's classrooms.

Savoie said the annual institutional reports will be a key element in the Board of Regents' new statewide teacher preparation accountability system that will grade colleges and universities on the strength of their teacher education programs, the number of education graduates they produce, and expansion of university-school partnerships.

Through the state initiative, beginning 2002, teacher preparation performance scores will be calculated for every public and private university in Louisiana. Outstanding university efforts will be recognized and inadequate university scores will be aggressively addressed.

"With education leading the federal agenda," said Savoie, "Louisiana's initiatives in accountability and improved teacher preparation should put Louisiana out ahead of other states in teacher training reforms. I don't believe that higher education has a more serious responsibility than that of providing every child in Louisiana with what should be their birthright -- access to a competent, caring and qualified teacher."

To measure program success in Louisiana, three broad indicators will be phased in over the next three years. A teacher quality index will be designed to measure the overall number of education graduates, as well as the number of minority graduates and graduates in critical certification shortage areas. This index also will establish recommended numbers of education graduates for each college or university based on statewide needs. The institutional performance index will measure passage rates on state certification examinations, how well universities have prepared first-year teachers through a survey of graduates and school evaluators, and teacher retention rates. These retention rates will not include teachers who left the state for family reasons or better job opportunities. Third, an index will be developed to measure the outreach and collaborative efforts within the PK-16 community.

"We are embracing and promoting an accountability system," Savoie said, "that involves the university and school districts in a partnership that will address teacher preparation at all levels. This is the right approach to encourage systemic change."

The institutional reports for Louisiana's colleges of education may be viewed on the Board of Regents' website at [www.regents.state.la.us](http://www.regents.state.la.us).

\*\*\*